



STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

MICHAEL F. EASLEY  
GOVERNOR

LYNDO TIPPETT  
SECRETARY

**North Carolina Board of Transportation  
Environmental Planning and Policy Committee  
Meeting Minutes for March 1, 2006**

A meeting of the Environmental Planning and Policy Committee (EPPC) was held March 1, 2006 at 8:30 AM in the Board Room (Room 150) of the Transportation Building. Board Member Nina Szlosberg chaired the meeting. Other Board of Transportation members that attended were:

Tom Betts	Nancy Dunn
Marvin Blount, III	Doug Galyon
Conrad Burrell	G. R. Kindley
Bob Collier	Arnold Lakey
	Cam McRae
Marion Cowell	Andy M. Perkins, Jr.

Other attendees included:

Bob Andrews	Berry Jenkins	Mike Pettyjohn
Tad Boggs	Tim Johnson	Ellis Powell
Audrey de Nazelle	Daniel Keel	Andrew Sawyer
Steve DeWitt	Don Lee	Joel Setzer
C. A. Gardner	Becky Luce-Clark	Roy Shelton
Ricky Greene	Melba McGee	Amy Simes
Phil Harris	Ehren Meister	John Sullivan
Teresa Hart	Mike Mills	Jay Swain
Mike Holder	Barry Moose	Greg Thorpe
Julie Hunkins	Jon Nance	
Pat Ivey	Ken Pace	

Ms. Szlosberg called the meeting to order and circulated the attendance sheet. Ms. Szlosberg accepted a motion to approve the meeting minutes from the February 2006 committee meeting. The minutes were approved as presented. Ms. Szlosberg opened by commenting that today's agenda topic is very inspiring and was initiated by Chairman Doug Galyon, who had the opportunity to hear the presentation at a previous seminar.

Ms. Szlosberg introduced Dr. Douglas Crawford-Brown, Director of the Carolina Environmental Program at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, to present "Who Is Really Responsible for Environmental Problems and Their Solutions (A Look in the Mirror)?" Ms. Szlosberg noted Dr. Crawford-Brown's extensive resume.

Dr. Crawford-Brown opened by commenting that he gives the same presentation to everyone, whether its an interest group, civic organization, or government body. His primary message is to explain that how we've solved environmental problems in past will not work in solving future environmental problems. He uses the problem of dealing with climate change as the focal point. The "villain" that we have identified in the past is actually not accurate. A lot of the ineffectiveness within the environmental community is because the problem has been incorrectly identified. To move forward we will have to correctly identify the environmental problem, who causes the problem, and who can correct the problem. Dr. Crawford-Brown noted that his presentation title gives a clue to the cause of the problem and he pointed to the phrase "a look in the mirror."

To explain his viewpoint Dr. Crawford-Brown elaborated on a case example from his studies in Cambridge, England. His central principle is that people have legitimate needs (food, shelter, transportation, jobs, etc.). In turn, environmental solutions that meet these legitimate needs must be achievable and effective. In the process of meeting these needs people release carbon dioxide into the atmosphere. Dr. Crawford-Brown presented a set of graphs that correlated an increase in carbon dioxide over time and a goal that Cambridge has set for itself to reduce environmental effects.

Dr. Crawford-Brown noted that to sustain a community there are three primary requirements: environmental quality, economic vitality, and social justice. The goal of any community should be to look at how these needs are connected, and can together achieve sustainability. He used Hippocrates as an example and the theory that it's beyond air and water, but the place and design in which we live that may cause disease. Dr. Crawford-Brown used the development and construction of a university facility in Cambridge as an example to elaborate how an environmental solution was addressed in the past. The old solution is to confront the environmental problem or "industry" with new laws and regulations. He noted that while the old solution had validity, it will be ineffective in the future to solve our environmental problems. He elaborated that this just won't work in the future to solve modern environmental problems because of our primary and legitimate needs. Dr. Crawford-Brown asked the question, how will we identify who is responsible for the environmental problems and solutions?

Dr. Crawford-Brown identified five ways in which we can "divide up" our causes and solutions, which may better solve modern environmental problems. The five causes that may achieve a solution are political regions, municipalities, energy sectors, institutions, and individual. He elaborated on the first solution, political regions, by using the East of England Region as an example. He noted that they identified four regional development priorities, which are very similar to issues confronting North Carolina communities. He noted that transportation systems were a mutual solution identified to connect the three legitimate needs of the East of England Region.

Dr. Crawford-Brown began to shift his presentation from a global perspective to one more applicable to the United States and North Carolina. He noted that the United States overall has a very weak federal environmental policy, unlike that of European countries. The major difference is that England will apply policy nationwide, and the U.S. grants its states the ability to create its

own decentralized environmental policy. This then gives North Carolina the ability to create and define how it can effect environmental policy and global warming individually. A local example is the NC Legislative Commission on Global Climate Change. This commission will define how our state balances the primary needs of environmental quality, economic vitality and social justice. An example may be to establish renewable portfolio standards that set energy requirement goals. When states begin to address the primary needs, it's imperative that they understand that there is a reliance on competition and cooperation from other states and nations. Decisions to move forward must be feasible and all government must rely on the decisions created by its voters. Environmental solutions must be politically sustainable by the voters (citizens can vote on their elected officials).

A second possible solution to environmental problems of the future may be the power of municipalities or city governments. Cities have minimal powers, however one that they do have is the ability to plan and create planning commissions. Dr. Crawford-Brown used the example of housing costs as a model that could be influenced by urban planning, which may in turn improve the environment. This very issue is happening in Chapel Hill and includes managing transportation needs. Transportation plays a critical stage in planning and developing the future infrastructure of municipalities. Transportation is only created by the demands of its residents.

Dr. Crawford-Brown identified the third possible solution as energy sectors. Energy sectors is a solution that Cambridge chose to focus on, which emphasized transportation. Because of the energy and transportation policies in place, 49% of Cambridge residents get to work on bicycles, the highest in all of Europe. They also use public transit, but do not use "park and ride" lots similar to Chapel Hill.

To have an immediate impact on the energy sector, in theory it would be ideal to mandate that all North Carolina utility companies reduce their energy output by 60%. However, this is not practicable because the utility companies only play on the demand of the consumer, and the consumer currently demands only what they output. If the consumer is willing to pay more for additional utility resources, there is no incentive for the companies to reduce output. Each individual consumer drives the everyday market place by their consumption of energy -- not the company itself. There are no incentives for utility companies to reduce consumption output.

The fourth solution is the institution. If every institution (organization, campus, agency, unit) were to reduce its carbon dioxide production, then the state and nation will reach its goal. Each institution needs to step forward by making decisions that encourage its employees to make good environmental decisions, like riding a bicycle to work. The institutional policies are only as beneficial as what the municipality and state have created. The institution, city, and state are connected in the decision-making process and effect each other independently.

The final solution to global warming and our modern environmental problems is the individual. An easy solution is to empower every human to reduce their carbon dioxide emissions by 60%. Every individual is their own "carbon manager." The idea is that each person can make their own decisions on how to reduce their own carbon dioxide output. Dr. Crawford-Brown elaborated with an example from Cambridge where the university students went to the local market and labeled the produce with how much carbon was produced to get it to the market.

Some goods may have been shipped from far away producing greater amounts of carbon, while other goods may have been produced locally generating minimal amounts of carbon. Therefore, this gave the local consumers the ability to manage their carbon dioxide output by deciding what to purchase. Individuals will only make decisions based on the options that are provided to them through the institutions around them and the municipalities they live in.

In summary, Dr. Crawford-Brown commented that in the end it takes everyone working together to overcome these challenges. National policies influence states -- which influences cities -- which influence institutions -- which influence the individuals. Dr. Crawford-Brown ended the presentation by commenting on Plato's Republic, which elaborates on how individuals build cities or nations. Plato noted three things that the individual needs to build a city: passions, reason, and will. An individual's passion combined with reason, and their political, economic or social will, enables the creation of sustainable decisions and policies. A solution to our future environmental problems can all be found in the five identified causes and solutions.

Dr. Crawford-Brown opened up the floor for a few questions. Ms. Szlosberg asked whether Dr. Crawford-Brown had any observations on North Carolina's transportation sector. Dr. Crawford-Brown responded that we've set up a system of settling that has created sprawl and that relies on vehicles as its primary transportation mode. He noted that we have a terrible mass transit system to move people around. This isn't necessarily bad, it's just the way that we've created our system here in North Carolina. He noted that he doesn't know what the answer is to improve the system based on the way communities have been settled in. He feels there is a lot of work ahead for the transportation industry and North Carolina has a very serious challenge ahead of itself.

Ms. Szlosberg asked if there were two or three solutions that DOT could do as an agency. Dr. Crawford-Brown noted that he has very little knowledge in transportation policy, but feels strongly that it comes down to each individual. Specifically, the vehicles we individually choose to drive is a critical decision that can have an immediate environmental impact. Another potential impact that could be looked at is how we build and develop our communities and land. Dr. Crawford-Brown believes we need to build communities that are high density, have the right amenities, and are self sustainable. He also believes that we must always remain optimistic in our solutions and decisions.

Ms. Szlosberg thanked Dr. Crawford-Brown, board members, and meeting attendees. The meeting was adjourned at 9:22 AM. The next meeting of the Environmental Planning and Policy Committee will be Wednesday, April 5, 2006 at 8:30 AM in the Board Room (Room 150) of the Transportation Building.

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